

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

New claims 50 and 51 have been added.

This amendment adds, changes and/or deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 29-51 are now pending in this application. Claims 38-42, 44, and 45 have been provisionally withdrawn from consideration.

Claim Objections

Claims 29-37, 43, and 46-49 are objected to for containing informalities. Claims 29, 32, 46, and 48 have been amended to overcome the objections. Withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 29-32, 34-37, 43, and 46-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,113,131 (hereafter "Uehara et al."). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended claim 29 recites a method of making a cover component mountable to an airbag system, the cover component having a tear line that is torn open when an airbag of the airbag system inflates, comprising: providing a die having a core surface having a raised line formed on the core surface; providing a moldable material; molding said moldable material using said die so as to form a molded material having a recessed line corresponding to said raised line, the recessed line extending in a line and having a first end, a central portion with opposing sides, and a second end; providing a laser; and irradiating said molded material

using said laser so as to bore a plurality of hollows in said recessed line along the central portion in said molded material at intervals, and wherein a bottom of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a sloped surface inclined relative to a back of the cover component, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line. Claim 46 contains similar language. Claims 30-32, 34-37, and 43 depend from claim 29. Claims 47 and 48 depend from claim 46.

Uehara et al. discloses an instrument panel that includes a tearable portion for inflating an air bag. See Uehara et al. at col. 1, lines 5-8. Uehara et al. discloses that a groove 31b can be formed in a lid portion 31A previously or during shaping of the lid 31 to form a groove bottom and the groove 31b can be irradiated with a laser to form a tearable portion 31a. See Uehara et al. at col. 7, lines 10-22.

The Office provided an annotated copy of Figures 4A and 4B of Uehara et al. in the Office Action to illustrate a slope in the groove 31b and tearable portion 31a of Uehara et al. See Office Action at pages 9 and 10. However, the sloped surface for the groove 31b and tearable portion 31a of Uehara et al. inclined so that the sloped surface extends in a transverse direction to the recessed line, i.e., perpendicular to the recessed line. See Figures 4A and 4B of Uehara et al. Uehara et al. does not disclose a method of making a cover component mountable to an airbag system, “wherein a bottom of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a sloped surface inclined relative to a back of the cover component, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line.”

For example, Figure 5, which is a view along line IV-IV shown in Figure 1, shows a non-limiting example of a sloped surface that is inclined in a longitudinal direction of a recessed line. The sloped surface disclosed by Uehara et al. is inclined in a different direction than that recited in claims 29 and 46 because the sloped surface of Uehara et al. extends in a direction that is transverse to the recessed line. Therefore, Uehara et al. does not disclose all of the features of claims 29 and 46.

For at least the reasons discussed above, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 29-37, 43, and 46-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,195,773 (hereafter “Sawada et al.”) in view of Uehara et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Sawada et al. discloses a cover for an air bag that includes a central tear line 2 and end tear lines 3 and 4. See Sawada et al. at col. 2, lines 10-17. The Office provided an annotated copy of Figures 1-5 of Sawada et al. in the Office Action to illustrate a slope in the tear line 2 of Sawada et al. See Office Action at pages 9 and 10. In particular, the Office demonstrates with the annotated copy of Figure 4 of Sawada et al. that the central tear line 2 forms a sloped surface.

However, the sloped surface for the tear lines of Sawada et al. inclined so that the sloped surface extends in a transverse direction to the tear lines, i.e., perpendicular to the tear lines. See Figures 1 and 4 of Sawada et al. Sawada et al. does not disclose a method of making a cover component mountable to an airbag system, “wherein a bottom of the recessed line at the first or second end of the recessed line is molded to form a sloped surface inclined relative to a back of the cover component, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line.” Therefore, Sawada et al. does not disclose or suggest all of the features of claims 29 and 46.

As discussed above, Uehara et al. fails to disclose or suggest all of the features recited in claims 29 and 46.

It would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to combine the teachings of Uehara et al. and Sawada et al. to provide the methods of claims 29 and 46. A basic requirement of a *prima facie* case of obviousness is that a prior art reference, or prior art references when combined, must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. See M.P.E.P. §§ 2143, 2143.03. It would not have been obvious to combine the teachings of Uehara et al.

and Sawada et al. to provide the methods of claims 29 and 46 because these references do not disclose or suggest all of the features of claims 29 and 46.

For at least the reasons discussed above, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

New Claims

New claims 50 and 51 have been added. Claim 50 depends from claim 29 and claim 51 depends from claim 46. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 50 and 51 are allowable for at least the reasons discussed above.

Claims 50 and 51 further recite “wherein the H shape includes a central portion and legs extending from the central portion, wherein the sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of the recessed line at ends of the legs of the H shape.” Uehara et al. and Sawada et al. do not disclose or suggest an H shape in which a sloped surface is inclined in a longitudinal direction of a recessed line at ends of the legs of the H shape. Therefore, it would not have been obvious to combine these references to provide the methods of claims 50 and 51.

Applicant submits that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

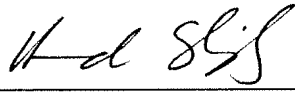
The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for

such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date 10/30/2007

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